

## Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5633

INFO USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

UNCLAS LONDON 14798

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD US UK

SUBJECT: US WINE EXPORTS TO UK: UK REGULATIONS ON  
SHERRY

REF: STATE 228018

1. INFORMATION GIVEN TO DEPARTMENT BY FROMM AND SICHEL  
INC. IS ESSENTIALLY ACCURATE. ONLY WINES FROM JEREZ  
AREA OF SPAIN MAY BE IMPORTED INTO THE UK USING THE  
TERM "SHERRY." THIS RULING WAS CONTAINED IN A UK HIGH  
COURT DECISION OF 1967.

2. HOWEVER, THE COURT DID ALLOW CERTAIN EXCEPTIONS ON  
THE BASIS OF "LONG USAGE" (I.E. PRE-1850 IMPORTS). THE  
TERMS WHICH WERE GRANTED EXCEPTIONS WERE "CYPRUS SHERRY,"  
"SOUTH AFRICAN SHERRY," "AUSTRALIAN SHERRY," "BRITISH  
SHERRY," "COMMONWEALTH SHERRY," AND "EMPIRE SHERRY."  
THE COURT'S RULING ON EXCEPTIONS DID NOT APPLY TO THE  
COMMONWEALTH PER SE, BUT HAD LARGELY THAT EFFECT BECAUSE  
THESE COUNTRIES WERE THE TRADITIONAL SUPPLIERS. THERE  
WAS NO PROVISION MADE FOR "CANADIAN SHERRY." (HOWEVER,  
SHERRY FROM CANADA IS ALLOWED TO ENTER UNDER "COMMON-  
WEALTH SHERRY" LABEL.)

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3. THE NET RESULT IS THAT ANY WINE FROM THE U.S. USING

"SHERRY" IN ITS TITLE MAY NOT BE IMPORTED INTO THE UK. COMMONWEALTH COUNTRIES ARE APPARENTLY BEING ALLOWED TO IMPORT UNDER "EMPIRE" OR "COMMONWEALTH" LABEL. WE ASKED HYPOTHETICALLY IF U.S. SHERRY COULD ENTER UNDER EITHER OF THESE TWO TERMS. (AFTER ALL, THE U.S. WAS ONCE A COLONY.) THE INITIAL REACTION AT THE WORKING LEVEL WAS NEGATIVE.

4. SINCE SHERRY IS A "HIGH STRENGTH" OR "HEAVY" WINE (I.E. ABOVE 15 PERCENT ALCOHOL BY VOLUME), IT IS NOT CONTROLLED BY EC WINE LABELLING REGULATIONS. THE UK WILL CONTINUE TO HAVE EXCLUSIVE JURISDICTION ON LABELLING OF SHERRY UNTIL THE COMMUNITY AGREES TO A COMMON POLICY ON "HIGH STRENGTH" WINES. ONE OTHER RESULT OF THE UK'S POLICY IS THAT FRANCE AND ITALY CANNOT IMPORT WINES LABELLED SHERRY INTO THE UK AND HAVE BEEN PRESSURING THE UKG FOR SOME TIME TO ALLOW THEIR PRODUCTS TO ENTER USING THE TERM SHERRY. FRENCH AND ITALIAN SHERRIES ARE IN FACT IMPORTED INTO THE UK BUT ARE LABELLED WITH TERMS LIKE "CREAM STYLE FORTIFIED WINE" AND "RICH CREAM FORTIFIED WINE."

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## Message Attributes

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